

Message Text

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EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

FOR UNDERSECRETARY SISCO FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS EG
SUBJECT: COMPLETION OF PORT SAID MINESWEEPING OPERATION

REF: CAIRO 8952

SUMMARY. ALTHOUGH THERE HAVE BEEN NO DETONATIONS, CTF-65 ADVISES PORT SAID MINESWEEPING EXPEDITION COMPLETED. ADMIRAL BAGLEY CONCURS AND NOTES FIVE MINEFIELDS HAVE BEEN SWEEPED TO 99 PERCENT PROBABILITY OF ACTUATION. THIS IS THE BEST THAT CAN BE EXPECTED. NEVERTHELESS, AT MY REQUEST, ADMIRAL BAGLEY HAS INSTRUCTED INCHON CONTINUE SWEEPING OPERATIONS UNTIL OCT 10, IN FORM OF EXPLORATORY SWEEPS AROUND MINE-FIELDS 1, 2, AND 3 TO REDUCE POSSIBILITY THAT LACK OF DETONATIONS MIGHT BE RESULT OF OUR HAVING BEEN GIVEN ERRONEOUS MINEFIELD LOCATIONS. AT WORKING LEVEL, EGYPTIAN NAVAL OFFICERS SEEM SATISFIED DESPITE ABSENCE OF DETONATIONS. TO FORMALLY TERMINATE OPERATIONS, I HAVE SUGGESTED THAT CDR CTF-65 WITH MY ALUSNA CALL ON ADMIRAL ZIKRY TO PRESENT HIM WITH WRITTEN STATISTICAL SUMMARY SHOWING WHAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED. EGYPTIAN NAVY MAY ASK FOR WRITTEN GUARANTEE. THIS WE SHOULD NOT DO, THOUGH I SEE NO OBJECTION TO ORAL STATEMENT (BACK UP BY WRITTEN STATISTICAL SUMMARY) THAT FIELDS HAVE BEEN SWEEPED TO 99 PERCENT

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PROBABILITY. GIVEN EARLIER EXPRESSING EGYPTIAN

SENSITIVITY, WE DO NOT PLAN EXTENSIVE PUBLICITY. INCHON WILL THEREAFTER MAKE OPERATIONAL THREE-DAY VISIT TO ALEXANDRIA BEGINNING OCT 13. WE ARE LIKELY BE ASKED FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR EGYPTIAN NAVY TO CONDUCT ITS FOLLOW-UP PART OF THE MISSION. IN THIS CONNECTION, WOULD APPRECIATE REPLY ASAP TO QUERIES RAISED REFTEL. END SUMMARY.

1. AS YOU KNOW, USN HAS BEEN ENGAGED PAST SIX WEEKS IN CONDUCTING MINESWEEPING OPERATIONS BETWEEN PORT SAID AND DAMIETTA. OPERATIONS CONDUCTED BY CTF-65 ABOARD USS INCHON, WHICH IS IN PORT SAID AREA. I HAVE NOW BEEN ADVISED BY CTF-65 THAT APPROVED OPERATIONS COMPLETED. CINCUSNAVEUR, ADMIRAL BAGLEY, WITH WHOM I HAVE HAD CLOSE CONTACT AS THE MISSION PROGRESSED, HAS ALSO PROVIDED ME WITH THE BENEFIT OF HIS PROFESSIONAL JUDGMENT THAT THIS IS SO.

2. CTF-65 HAS HAD NO RPT NO DETONATIONS, WHICH HAS BEEN A BIT WORRISOME. IT SEEMS TOO COINCIDENTAL THAT AMERICAN SHIP NECHES SHOULD HAVE STRUCK THE ONLY LIVE MINE IN THE FIVE FIELDS. HOWEVER, ADMIRAL BAGLEY INFORMS ME THAT USN TESTING CENTER AT PANAMA CITY HAS CONDUCTED TESTS AGAINST SOVIET MINE OF THE TYPE SOWN AT PORT SAID AND CONCLUDED EXISTING TECHNIQUES AND SYSTEMS ARE EFFECTIVE AGAINST THEM. THUS, FACT THAT WE HAVE HAD NO DETONATIONS MUST MEAN BATTERIES ARE DEAD AND MINES THEREFORE INACTIVE. ADDITIONALLY, CONTROLLED EXPERIMENT WAS RUN BY CTF-65 LAST THURSDAY INVOLVING SOWING OF TWO LIVE EGYPTIAN MINES FOLLOWED BY HELICOPTER SWEEP OVER THEM. BOTH DETONATED, AGAIN SUGGESTING OUR SYSTEMS WORK.

3. NEVERTHELESS, AT MY REQUEST, ADMIRAL BAGLEY HAS INSTRUCTED INCHON TO CONTINUE SWEEP OPERATIONS UNTIL OCT 10. THESE EXTENDED OPERATIONS WILL INVOLVE EXPLORATORY SWEEPS AROUND MINEFIELDS 1, 2, AND 3 TO REDUCE POSSIBILITY THAT LACK OF DETONATIONS MIGHT BE THE RESULT OF OUR HAVING BEEN GIVEN ERRONEOUS MINEFIELD LOCATION DATA BY THE EGYPTIANS.

4. ACCORDING CTF-65 CDR, THE EGYPTIAN NAVAL OFFICERS WORKING WITH HIM SEEM SATISFIED DESPITE ABSENCE OF DETONATIONS. QUESTION NOW ARISES OF WHEN AND HOW TO NOTIFY GOE THAT OUR PART OF THE MISSION IS TERMINATED. I HAVE SUGGESTED THAT CTF-65 CDR AND MY ALUSNA CALL
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ON ADMIRAL ZIKRY TO PRESENT A WRITTEN STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF NIMBUS STREAM OPERATIONS. USN NOTES THAT FIVE FIELDS HAVE BEEN SWEEPED TO 99 PERCENT PROBABILITY OF ACTUATION AND IT SEEMS TO ME THAT WE COULD SO STATE ORALLY. I DO NOT RPT NOT BELIEVE ANY WRITTEN GUARANTEE SHOULD BE GIVEN. I EXPECT EGYPTIAN NAVY MAY ASK FOR SUCH GUARANTEE, AS WAS DONE WITH THE SOVIETS AT STRAITS OF GUBAL, BUT BELIEVE WE SHOULD POLITELY DECLINE AND LIMIT OURSELVES TO ORAL STATEMENT AND PRESENTATION OF AFORE-MENTIONED STATISTICAL

SUMMARIES. GIVEN EARLIER EXPRESSED GOE SENSITIVITY, WE DO NOT RPT NOT PLAN ANY EXTENSIVE PUBLICITY. I WOULD ALSO TAKE OPPORTUNITY INFORM FAHMY THAT MISSION IS COMPLETED. THEREAFTER, INCHON WILL MAKE THREE-DAY OPERATIONAL FAREWELL VISIT TO ALEXANDRIA TO COMMENCE OCTOBER 13. EGYPTIANS HAVE ALREADY INDICATED THEY WILL APPROVE THIS.

5. THIS LEAVES THE QUESTION OF EGYPTIAN NAVY FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES. WE UNDERSTAND ZIKRY NOW PLANS TO DEFER THESE UNTIL NEXT SPRING BECAUSE OF UPCOMING INCLEMENT WEATHER CONDITIONS. THIS SEEMS REASONABLE, BUT EGYPTIAN NAVY WILL STILL LOOK TO US FOR SOME TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO CONDUCT ITS PART OF THE MISSION. IN THIS CONNECTION, IT WOULD BE HELPFUL HAVE EARLY REPLY TO QUESTIONS RAISED REFTEL TO PERMIT US DISCUSS WITH EGYPTIANS SUCH FOLLOW-ON HELP AS WE MAY BE PREPARED TO OFFER.

6. UNLESS YOU WISH OTHERWISE, I WILL PROCEED ALONG ABOVE LINES. WILL ALSO WELCOME ANYTHING YOU CAN DO TO OBTAIN AGREEMENT RE EXPECTED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REQUESTS.
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